when Anton told us that one of the precincts had organized an open-air meeting for that night and wanted a speaker. There was just time enough to get in touch with the headquarters of the local organization and reach the place. Nobody wanted to go on such short notice. Anton asked me if I would go. I replied that I had never spoken in an open-air meeting and did not know what I was expected to say. He waved aside these objections. "It doesn't matter what you say. Just say something about 'away with the Tsar!' and stress the fact that the Bolsheviks are the only ones who defend the interests of the people!" And he handed me written directions for finding the local headquarters.

I was to take the double-deck streetcar in front of the Admiralty and to sit on the upper deck to avoid spies, who allegedly checked only the lower deck. Next, I had to change to a horse-drawn trolley, again taking a seat on the top deck; then alight at the Alexandrovsk village in front of the church, walk back two blocks, turn left, cross a small bridge, go right to the end of the sidewalk, and stop at the third house on the left. I was to knock three times at the door and tell the woman who opened it that Ivan had sent me. "Memorize the address and destroy the note," Anton warned.

The night was cold and windy. I shivered in my light overcoat on top of the streetcar and thought about my speech, but could not find an opening sentence. Then I forgot about the speech completely. For the first time in my life, I was in a factory district. I knew, of course, that St. Petersburg was encircled by locomotive shops, shipbuilding yards, and munitions factories. Some of these plants were among the largest and most modern in Europe and had expanded during the Russo-Japanese War. I knew there were a dozen plants with more than ten thousand workers each in the southern precincts alone, but I had never seen any of them or the workers' settlements around them.

Now I saw endless rows of small shabby houses punctuated by huge brick buildings, some dark, others with lights blazing from numberless windows. The streets were empty. Tongues of flame licked from high chimneys. The air was full of roaring clangor and whistles, but no human beings were in sight. This was the realm of iron, fire, and invisible Cyclopes. By the time the trolley stopped in front of a modest church in Alexandrovsk village, I was overwhelmed by my new impressions and still had not thought out a single sentence of my speech.

At the headquarters I found a bespectacled woman, whom I immediately identified as a trained nurse, and a young worker in high boots. The worker, Pavel, explained that he was a member of the